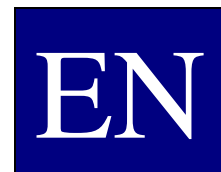




**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 11 May 2010
9711/10 (Presse 119)

**JOINT COMMUNIQUE FROM THE 10th EU-SOUTH
AFRICA MINISTERIAL POLITICAL DIALOGUE
MEETING HELD IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM
11 MAY 2010**

Within the framework of the South Africa - European Union Strategic Partnership, a Political Dialogue meeting at Ministerial level was held in Brussels, Belgium, on 11 May 2010. The meeting was co-chaired by Baroness Catherine ASHTON, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission and H.E. Ms. Maite NKOANA-MASHABANE, Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa.

The EU Delegation also included Mr Andris PIEBALGS, Commissioner for Development of the European Commission.

The South African delegation also included H.E. Dr Lindiwe SISULU, Minister of Defence and Military Veterans.

P R E S S

BILATERAL RELATIONS

Implementation of the SA-EU Strategic Partnership

South Africa and the EU stressed their continued commitment to the EU-SA Strategic Partnership and to the joint promotion of peace, security and stability in the world, and in Africa in particular. Both Parties recalled the successful holding of the 2nd EU-SA Summit on 11 September 2009 in Kleinmond, South Africa as a further important step in strengthening the partnership between the EU and South Africa.

The Parties noted the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009 and the holding of this meeting at Ministerial level under the new institutional arrangements established on the EU side and looked forward to the ongoing consolidation of relations at all levels.

The Parties reviewed the broad range of areas of cooperation between South Africa and the European Union. In particular, they welcomed progress on aviation following agreement on terms of reference for cooperation in this area and the recent engagements with a view to restoring legal certainty to existing bilateral air services agreements between South Africa and EU Member States.

The Parties also noted ongoing exchanges under the dialogues on migration, health, environment, space, ICT, energy and science and technology. In support of the full implementation of the Trade and Development Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) and the Strategic Partnership Joint Action Plan, they welcomed ongoing work to further develop structured dialogues and cooperation on education and training, crime and justice, tax and customs, as well as on employment and social affairs.

The Parties took note of the forthcoming UN Review Conference on the Millennium Development Goals to be held in September 2010 and reiterated their commitments to their attainment. In this context the Parties recalled that gender equality and women empowerment are essential for economic development, poverty reduction and for reaching the Millennium Development Goals.

Both Parties look forward to the 3rd SA-EU Summit to be held in Brussels in the second half of 2010. It was recalled that the second meeting on peace and security between South Africa and the EU Political and Security Committee (PSC), will be held in Brussels on 2 June 2010. The Parties also welcomed the forthcoming Inter-Parliamentary Dialogue meeting to be held in Cape Town on 25-26 May 2010.

The Parties discussed the current activities of the European Investment Bank (EIB) in South Africa and Southern Africa. They welcomed the EIB's support and commitment to South Africa's economic and infrastructure development through the EIB's current €900 million mandate for South Africa for the period 2007-13. Both Parties noted the fact that a significant portion of the EIB's current mandate has already been committed and called for continued support by the EIB for South Africa's development needs.

Political and institutional developments in the EU and South Africa

The meeting also addressed political and institutional developments in the EU and South Africa. In particular, the EU side reported on progress in the implementation of the external relations provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, including the establishment of the European External Action Service, which will assist the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

The Parties noted the progress in South Africa's preparations for the FIFA 2010 World Cup, and encouraged European supporters to visit South African shores for the first ever World Cup to be held in Africa.

EU –SADC Economic Partnership Agreement

Both sides engaged in an open discussion on the EC-SADC Economic Partnership Agreement and on the implications that these negotiations could have on current processes of regional integration in Southern Africa. In this regard the parties took note of the recent communication from the SACU Council of Ministers to Commissioner De Gucht and his reply. Both sides agreed to urgently pursue the negotiation and resolution of all outstanding issues with a view to a prompt and mutually satisfactory conclusion that supports regional integration and development in Southern Africa.

REGIONAL & GLOBAL ISSUES

Joint Africa-EU Strategy

The Parties continued to attach great importance to the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, which has been instrumental in putting relations between the EU and Africa on a new, equal footing. Both Parties underlined the Strategy's importance as a political framework to strengthen cooperation between Africa and Europe on particularly peace and security issues, advancing Africa's development agenda and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and global challenges such as the economic crisis and climate change.

The Parties welcomed progress made in the implementation of the Strategy's first Action Plan (2008-2010). Both Parties welcomed the proposed options to improve the implementation of the Joint Strategy as agreed by the Africa-EU Ministerial Dialogue Meeting held in Luxembourg in April 2010. The Parties also underscored the importance of continuing to improve the institutional architecture supported by collective ownership, inputs and resources.

Both Parties reaffirmed their readiness to actively support the strengthened implementation of the Action Plan and called upon all other actors to accelerate efforts to achieve tangible results and added value for the benefit of our citizens.

The active participation of all stakeholders including, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Parliaments, the Private Sector and Civil Society is essential for the effective implementation of this intercontinental partnership. The Parties stress their joint commitment towards a successful Africa-EU Summit in November 2010 and the further deepening of the relationship, including through enhanced bilateral political and policy dialogue, better coordination in the UN and in other international bodies and high-level conferences, and through active support of the African regional and continental integration agenda.

Global Economic Crisis

The Parties reiterated their firm commitment to the decisions of the London and Pittsburgh G20 Meetings and in particular on the agreed financial market reforms, and the Framework for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth. In this regard, the Parties exchanged views about the need for an intensified follow-up to the whole range of G-20 commitments of relevance to developing countries. The Parties believed that underrepresented developing countries should have a greater voice and representation in the international financial institutions, including their mandates and governance. The Parties looked forward to continued engagement on these issues at the G20 Summit to be hosted by Canada in June 2010.

The Parties emphasised the concern that the global economic crisis is hampering the Millennium Development Goals and reaffirmed the need for delivering on development assistance commitments.

Climate Change

The EU and South Africa exchanged views on the outcomes of the UN Summit in Copenhagen and discussed the way forward.

The Parties welcomed the Copenhagen Accord as a step towards a fair, effective transparent and inclusive multilateral outcome. The meeting acknowledged that although the Accord is not ambitious enough, it represents political agreement on many difficult issues in the negotiations and should give direction and impetus to the negotiations leading up to a full multilateral agreement under the UNFCCC. In this regard, the meeting underlined the need to continue to work towards an ambitious, legally binding agreement building on the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol to keep global warming below 2°C relative to pre-industrial levels.

The EU and South Africa welcomed the expressions of support for the Accord and the mitigation actions and commitments put forward thus far and urged countries that have not yet done so to put forward such actions or commitments as soon as possible. Both sides also welcomed the collective commitment by developed countries to provide “fast start” finance approaching about €21bn between 2010 and 2012, including the EU pledge of €7.2bn for the period 2010-12, and underlined the need to make "fast-start" finance available as soon as possible. Furthermore, both sides welcomed the commitment by developed countries to a goal of mobilizing jointly €70bn annually by 2020 to support the meaningful and transparent implementation of adaptation and mitigation actions by developing countries.

The EU took note of South Africa’s intention to cut its GHG emissions from business as usual by 34% by 2020 and 42% by 2025 and that the extent to which this action will be implemented depends on the provision of financial resources, technology transfer and capacity building support by developed countries. South Africa welcomed the EU's commitment to unilaterally reduce GHG emissions by 20% between 1990 and 2020 and the EU's offer to reduce emissions by 30% in the context of an ambitious international agreement.

PEACE & SECURITY ISSUES

Sudan

The Parties welcomed the largely peaceful conduct of the recent elections in Sudan and commended the people of the Sudan for their active participation. They noted the efforts to form a new government and called upon all parties to settle outstanding differences and to establish a broad political basis in view of the implementation of the remaining elements of the CPA. Both sides stressed the need for all parties to fully respect the CPA, to address the remaining implementation issues, in particular the holding of the Referendum on Southern Sudan's self-determination in January 2011 and the necessary arrangements for the post-referendum period. They took cognizance of the importance of the post-referendum support processes.

They appealed to all parties to abstain from any initiatives which might destabilize this process and to pursue confidence building. The Parties stressed the importance of a close AU - EU cooperation. They encouraged the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan (AUHIP), led by former President Thabo Mbeki, to continue to play an active role in contributing to a smooth conclusion of the CPA and assisting in the democratic transformation of the country. The good cooperation between the UN missions in Sudan, the AU and IGAD as well as the other international actors remains essential.

Somalia

The Parties recalled the significance of the Agreement between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaah signed in Addis Ababa on 15 March 2010 and emphasised the need to scale-up support for the initiative. They encouraged the signatories to ensure speedy and effective implementation, and called upon the TFG to pursue its policy of inclusiveness with a view to accommodating all Somalis committed to peace and national reconciliation in the framework of the Djibouti accord. The EU expressed its continued support for and appreciation of AMISOM and the AU's political engagement in Somalia. South Africa expressed its appreciation for the EU's efforts, and in particular for the support to the Somali security sector. Both sides agreed on cooperating towards the capacity and institution building projects for the TFG and Somalis in general.

Madagascar

South Africa and the European Union recognise that the Maputo Agreements and the Addis Ababa Additional Act signed in August and November 2009 by all four main Malagasy role players constitute a decisive gain in the crisis exit process and a vital foundation for the conduct of an inclusive, consensual and as short as possible transition based on the holding of credible, transparent, free and fair elections in Madagascar. Both Parties congratulate the efforts undertaken in this respect by President Zuma, the SADC Mediator, former Mozambican President Chissano, and AU Commission President Ping, and encourage the African mediation to be further pursued. Both Parties urge the Malagasy parties to continue negotiations with a view to finding a negotiated settlement of the debilitating political crisis in their country and urgently implementing the agreements.

Zimbabwe

The Parties exchanged views on the latest political developments in Zimbabwe. In this regard, they noted progress made regarding the appointment of the Commissioners for the Media, Human Rights and Electoral Commissions. However, they expressed concern over the slow pace in the full implementation of the Global Political Agreement and urged the members of the Inclusive Government to move forward rapidly. South Africa's President Zuma and his Facilitation Team were commended for their efforts and SADC was encouraged to remain seized with the process. The Parties also noted and encouraged the ongoing EU-Zimbabwe political dialogue based on the Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement. They also recognized the complementarity of South Africa's Facilitation efforts and the EU – Zimbabwe political dialogue aiming at promoting and supporting the implementation of the Global Political Agreement.

Burundi

South Africa commends the EU on the invaluable support rendered in the resolution of the conflict in Burundi. Our strong partnership, inter alia, assured the success achieved and provided support to the people of Burundi. South Africa is indeed very encouraged by this positive contribution to peace and stability in Africa. Both Parties look forward to the upcoming elections as a positive milestone in the democratic process of Burundi.

Middle East Peace Process

South Africa and the EU stressed their unequivocal support for the immediate resumption of negotiations. These negotiations should lead to a settlement within 24 months. Both parties remain committed to the two-state solution with an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State, comprising the West Bank including East Jerusalem and Gaza living side by side in peace and security with the State of Israel.

South Africa and the EU reiterated that settlements and related activities and the separation barrier where built on occupied land, as well as evictions and the demolition of homes are illegal under international law and constitute an obstacle to peace and threaten to make a two-state solution impossible.

Both South Africa and the EU stressed their call for an immediate, sustained and unconditional opening of crossings for the flow of humanitarian aid, commercial goods and persons to and from Gaza and urged the full implementation of UNSCR 1860 and the full respect of international humanitarian law. Both Parties also agreed that they would welcome free and fair Palestinian elections when conditions permit.

In relation to the report of the UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, both parties take careful note of the call by the United Nations Security Council for both sides to conduct independent investigations into alleged violations of human rights and International Humanitarian Law.

At the same time, both sides encourage Israel, as it does similarly the Palestinians, to assume a constructive approach to a further credible and fully independent investigation into the allegations. Such investigations carried out by all parties to the conflict are essential for ensuring accountability for human rights and International Humanitarian Law violations, ruling out impunity and, ultimately, contributing to reconciliation and a durable peace.

Both Parties also agreed that a comprehensive peace must include a settlement between Israel and Syria as well as between Israel and Lebanon. Consequently, both Parties urged the Governments of Israel and Syria to redouble their efforts to advance towards peace and supported all efforts aimed at the reactivation of the talks between the two countries.

AOB

South Africa expressed its gratitude to the European Union for their hospitality during the Ministerial meeting.
